

Julie L. Jones
Executive Director

2900 Apalachee Parkway
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0500
www.flhsmv.gov



Charlie Crist
Governor

Bill McCollum
Attorney General

Alex Sink
Chief Financial Officer

Charles H. Bronson
Commissioner of Agriculture

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CONTACT: COURTNEY HEIDELBERG
(850) 617-3102

DRIVING IMPAIRED WILL COST YOU

~ Governor proclaims December as [*National Drunk and Drugged Driving \(3D\) Prevention Month*](#) ~

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Alcohol and drugs factored into more than 21,000 crashes last year, leading to more than 15,000 injuries. Since the holiday season is typically a time of celebration and heightened travel for many who drive to visit friends and family, December is designated as *National Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month*. To combat impaired driving, the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles has teamed up with the Governor's Office of Drug Control, local law enforcement agencies and safety advocates to educate drivers and to enforce the Driving Under the Influence laws. To emphasize the importance of this issue, Gov. Charlie Crist issued a proclamation to recognize *3D Prevention Month* in Florida.



“The holiday season is a time to celebrate, and no one should have to suffer the loss of a loved one at the hands of a drunk or drugged driver,” said Lieutenant Governor Jeff Kottkamp. “I am pleased to see our law enforcement agencies and safety advocates taking proactive measures to make the roadways safer for residents and for those visiting the Sunshine State during the holidays.”

“As traffic crashes and fatalities steadily drop each year, it is disconcerting to see drug-related injuries and crashes rise, which is exactly what happened between 2008 and 2009,” said Florida Highway Patrol Director, Colonel John Czernis. “The Florida Highway Patrol will participate in the nationwide, *Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.* national crackdown this month to enforce Florida’s tough DUI law. In addition, the Department will propose legislative changes this Spring that further strengthen the law as it pertains to drugged driving.”

Quick Facts:

- Alcohol and drugs contributed to 44 percent of Florida’s 2,563 fatalities in 2009.
- Drug-related injuries increased more than 19 percent last year.
- Drug-related crashes increased nearly 11 percent last year.
- The New Year’s Day 2009 holiday experienced the highest fatality rate per hour (0.35). During the four-day travel period, 56 percent of the 34 fatalities involved alcohol.
- During the four-day Christmas holiday travel period in 2009, 28 people died in alcohol-related crashes.

*Source: 2009 Florida Traffic Crash Statistics Report (www.flhsmv.gov/html/safety.html.)

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Protect Yourself, Your Family and Friends

During the holiday season and year-round, take steps to make sure that you and everyone with whom you celebrate avoid driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

- Plan ahead. Always designate a sober driver before any holiday party or celebration begins, or take a taxi or public transportation to/from a party if you plan to drink alcohol. A taxi or bus ride is much cheaper getting a DUI.
- Take the keys. Do not let a friend drive impaired.
- Be a helpful host. If you are hosting a party this holiday season, remind your guests to plan ahead and designate a sober driver, always offer alcohol-free beverages, and make sure all of your guests leave with a sober driver.
- Mind your meds. Heed the warning labels on prescription medicine bottles because even legal drugs can affect your ability to safely operate a motor vehicle.
- Dial *FHP (*347) on your cell phone to report an impaired driver.

The Florida Highway Patrol joins thousands of law enforcement organizations across the nation this month to remove impaired drivers from the roadways. The Patrol, often working in conjunction with local law enforcement partners, will conduct sobriety checkpoints and aggressively enforce Florida's DUI laws. FHP will participate in the national campaign, *Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.* impaired driving crack down between Dec. 16, 2010 - Jan. 3, 2011. To learn more about the Patrol and DHSMV, visit www.flhsmv.gov or follow us on Twitter at [@FDHSMV](https://twitter.com/FDHSMV).

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